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WHAT ARE WE FIGHTING ABOUT?

——ISSUED BY THE——

MARYLAND COUNCIL OF DEFENSE

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The first thing needful in the work of national defense is that every loyal citizen should clearly and fully understand the meaning and necessity of the present war, and the gravity of the crisis that confronts this country and the entire civilized world; and that every citizen-soldier should know *for* what he fights, and *from* what he is helping to save his own people and the generations of humanity that are to come. It is for this reason that the Maryland Council of Defense places this brief pamphlet in the hands of the people of Maryland—both those at home and those absent in the service of their State and Country.

WHAT ARE WE FIGHTING ABOUT?

There are some people who do not yet quite understand why the United States had to go to war, or what our boys in France are going to fight for. If you meet any such people, tell them that this is the answer:

When bandits break loose in a peaceful neighborhood, killing and robbing, what is done? The Sheriff summons a posse of citizens, whose duty it is to leave their ordinary vocations and assist him in putting down the law-breakers and restoring peace and order to the community. To serve, even at personal risk, in thus putting down lawlessness and violence is every citizen's duty. It is also required by his own interests, if he desires that he, his women-folk and his children shall be able to live and go about their business in security.

Just this is what has happened to the world. A great and powerful nation, mad with pride and ambition, has suddenly thrown over all restraints of civilization; has assaulted its peaceful neighbors with, at first, irresistible force; has shown utter contempt for the laws that govern the relations of countries to one another, and for its own solemn compacts; has gone through Europe and a part of Asia, devastating smiling lands, enslaving thousands of their population, and (in conjunction with the allies which it controls) killing hundreds of thousands of non-combatant men, women and children; and has finally declared war upon mankind at large by sending forth its submarines to lie in wait on the sea, the common highway of all nations, there to sink the ships and murder the citizens, not of Germany's enemies only, but of all countries.

When these outrages reached this last point, **the United States decided to join the posse of the civilized world, and put an end to the German reign of terror on sea and land. We could no more have kept out of this war than a decent citizen could refuse to serve in the posse of his county when**

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outlaws are terrorizing the whole region—and are lying in ambush to do murder upon his own road to market. There are, no doubt, some men who would even then skulk in a safe place, hoping that somebody else would take all the risks. But the people of the United States have not hitherto been that sort of people—and they do not propose to be that sort now. They are neither fools nor cowards; and skulking at such a time would be folly as well as ignominy. For it would only expose us, without allies or friends anywhere, to be attacked alone, sooner or later, by the outlaw nations after they had, through our failure to support the common cause of humanity, been enabled to triumph over those who are now resisting them.

This, then, is why we are in the war—**and why we are not going to quit, however great the sacrifice, until this menace is removed from the world; until women and children, even in little and peaceful countries, can live in safety from sudden outrage by invading hordes; until it is made clear to all men that ruthless violence and faithlessness are not the road to national power and prosperity, but that justice and law, good faith and mutual consideration, must prevail in the relations between peoples, as between individuals; until the outlaw government, and the misguided nation which still supports it, are defeated in their present purposes and ambitions, and are also made powerless to bring another such disaster upon mankind in our time or in our children's time.**

If there are any who do not yet realize the spirit and the methods of the government which we have to fight, they will find in the following pages a very few out of countless recorded examples of the sort of horror and lawlessness to which we mean to put an end, and against which we intend that our own people at home shall be safeguarded once for all.

WHAT HAPPENED AT DINANT

Dinant is a town in Belgium on the River Meuse; it had before the war a population of about 7,500. Upon it the Germans descended on August 21st, 1914; and there in a few days **they massacred more than 700 civilians—nearly one in every ten of the inhabitants.** Of the victims whose names have been recorded, **49 were women (of whom eight were over 70 years of age); 9 were little girls (under sixteen); 29 were boys, from seven to sixteen; and 10 were infants under five. Of the men, 15 were over seventy years old, and three at least were priests.** The town was also systematically set on fire and more than a thousand houses burned.

Of the scenes of horror in Dinant on those August days we have pictures from German sources. In 1915, after the publication of the reports of the official Belgian commissions which investigated the atrocities in Belgium, the German government was constrained to publish a "whitewashing" report of its own. **The whitewashing did not consist in a disproof of the above facts, but only in an attempt to justify them.** The German "White Book," for example, prints such accounts as the following by German officers (relating to the massacre in a single section of the town):

(*a*) Lieut. Von Rochow states that he arrived at Les Rivages (at Dinant) at nightfall on the 23rd and saw at the Ferry a great heap of bodies. He continues: "In the course of the evening, when the crossing had been begun, and things were quieter, we noticed that several wounded people were lying among them. These were brought away. I myself took a girl of about eight years who had a wound in her face, and an elderly woman who had been shot in the upper part of the thigh, to the women who had been taken prisoners, and handed them over to a doctor." (*b*) Staff-Surgeon Dr. Petrentz came on this great heap of bodies without knowing who had shot them. "I have heard," he says, "that the Grenadier Regiment No. 101 carried out an execution there. Among the people who were shot were some women,

but by far the greater number were young lads. Under the heap I discovered a girl of about five years of age, alive and without any injuries. I took her out and brought her down to the house where the women were. She took chocolate, was quite happy, and was clearly unaware of the seriousness of the situation. I then searched the heap of bodies to see whether any other children were underneath. But we only found one girl of about ten years of age, who had a wound in the lower part of the thigh. I had her wound dressed and brought her at once to the women."

The staff-surgeon seems a little disturbed by all this, but not much. He alludes to it as an "execution," as if that explained everything. In German eyes it did.

The account of the massacre at this point, drawn up by the Public Prosecutor of Dinant, is as follows:

(*c*) The inhabitants were seized on the arrival of the Germans and kept under guard near Rocher-Bayard. When the fire of the French slackened, the Germans began to construct a bridge. But they were still annoyed by a few shots. As these were infrequent, the Germans—honestly or otherwise—came to the conclusion that they were fired by franc-tireurs (snipers). They sent M. Bourdon, the Assistant Registrar of the Court, to announce that if the firing continued, all the prisoners would be executed. He did so, and recrossing the Meuse, surrendered himself and informed the German officers that he had been able to make sure that only French soldiers were firing. A few more French bullets came, and then a monstrous event took place, which one's mind would refuse to believe were it not that the survivors who bear witness and the gaping wounds of the corpses furnished absolutely conclusive proof. The whole mass of prisoners—men, women and children—were pushed up against a wall and shot.

Shot Before the Eyes of Their Wives and Children

Other scenes are described by a neutral, a Dutch citizen resident in Dinant. His narrative is published in the Amsterdam *Telegraaf* of December 8, 1914. Describing the slaughter in Parade Square, he says that

The women and children were separated from the men, the latter being placed on one side of the little square and the women and children on the other side. The firing party placed between them was ordered to fire. After a scene of heartrending agony, during which the women and children knelt before the officers, 153 victims fell writhing in a welter of blood. Two men who fell unhurt and four others who were slightly wounded pretended to be dead. The officer said: "Those able to rise must stand as the soldiers will not fire again." The six men mentioned rose. The officer ordered another volley and the men fell. The officer then ordered the machine gunners to fire some time on the bodies. The women and children were present all this time and were rendered distracted by grief and terror. The officer was unmoved, and said in bad French, "Mesdames, I've done my duty."

Meanwhile the pillaging of the town had begun. The Germans possessed most modern implements and appliances for opening safes, and they employed also chemical means for that purpose. A banker and his son who refused to say where the safes were, were shot. The plundering did not cease with houses—men in the street were searched for money.

M. Poncelet, one of the most respected merchants in Dinant, fled with his wife and six children. They were overtaken. An officer ordered him to be shot, and on a soldier refusing to shoot, the officer shot Poncelet with his revolver. M. Himers was killed in similar circumstances at Leffe (a suburb) under the eyes of his wife. He was the owner of a factory and Consul of the Argentine Republic.

The German Defense

What is the German defense? To an American there can be **no** defense. Civilized man—as he understands the term—simply does not, under any provocation, do these things to women, to young children, to babes in their mothers' arms. Yet the justification offered by the German government for the massacre referred to in the first three of the above extracts is worth noting. The substance of it is given in extract (*c*). The Germans were trying to cross the river on

pontoon bridges; they were being fired upon by a small body of French troops on the far side. Some German soldiers presently declared that some of the shots were fired from houses in the town; whereupon the promiscuous butchery of unarmed Belgians began. In the "commotion and confusion," it was, of course, impossible for the Germans to know that the shots were not fired by French or by regular Belgian soldiers. It is denied by the Belgians that the alleged firing by civilians took place. If there had been such firing, it would, of course, in no degree have given even a legal justification for the wholesale massacre of unarmed hostages. Germany before the war (1908) had pledged herself to the rule of civilized warfare which provides that the inhabitants of occupied territory shall not be punished for any acts committed by individuals, unless they "are jointly and severally responsible for those acts." ("Regulations concerning Laws and Customs of War on Land." Art. 51.) Yet it was the regular German practice, on entering any town, to take large numbers of hostages—including, usually, town officials, priests and leading citizens—and to kill all these innocent persons if any resistance or disturbance took place anywhere in the neighborhood. Thus the German Governor-General announced on October 5, 1914, that "the inhabitants of places near railways and telegraph lines which are destroyed **will be punished without mercy, whether or not people of these places are guilty of this destruction.** For this purpose hostages have been taken, and at the first attempt to destroy any railway, telegraph or telephone line they will be shot immediately." In one case (according to the testimony of a Belgian professor) a German train on the railroad between Brussels and Mons caused the explosion of one of the detonators, placed on the track to call the conductor's attention to a signal. Immediately the soldiers seized all the peasants in the neighborhood and shot them down. At Rheims a list of seventy-one hostages was posted, and it was announced that these would be hanged "if there was the least attempt at disorder" anywhere in the city.

These things are only examples of what has happened in scores of Belgian and French towns and villages. In Armenia yet more unspeakable atrocities were committed. More than half a million Armenian Christians have been systematically massacred by Turkish troops completely subject to the control of German officials.

It is thus that Prussia makes war—against the women and children of a country with which she had no quarrel and whose neutrality she was solemnly pledged to respect. And if she wins victory by such means as these, this way of making war will become the accepted way, to be followed by Germany herself and other ambitious nations in the future. Scenes like these we may expect to have some day in America, if Germany triumphs, and her standards of national conduct are vindicated by success.

We can, and we must, see to it **now** that such things as have been done in Belgium and France, in Serbia and Armenia, are never done again anywhere in the world. The first requisite to prevent their being done again is to make it plain, in this great instance, that a nation which adopts these methods of beginning and carrying on war, arrays against itself the entire force of the humanity and the civilization which it has outraged; that "frightfulness" and contempt for the law of nations are not the way to victory, but to sure defeat.

CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN

German Testimony

Dr. Harry Stuermer, a German officer, former correspondent of the *Cologne Gazette*, testifies that he was assured by one of the best-known German war correspondents, Paul

Schweder, that "there had been thousands of cases of women and young girls of the best Belgian and French families" assaulted by German soldiers, who remained unpunished in most instances.

(See summary of Dr. Stuermer's book, "Two War Years in Constantinople," in *The Nation*, New York, September 20, 1917.)

ENSLAVEMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN BY THE GERMANS IN NORTHERN FRANCE

(a) The Announcement

In Holy Week of 1916, the German Military Commander at Lille (France) caused a proclamation to be posted announcing that the inhabitants would be "removed from their homes and transported into the country," in order to be put to work in the agricultural districts of the occupied portion of France. It was consequently forbidden that any should absent themselves from their legal domiciles between 9 P. M. and 6 A. M. On the door of each house, on the morning it was to be visited, a notice was attached, to the effect that "all residents of this house, with the exception of children under 14 years, their mothers, and old people, must prepare to be deported in an hour and a half." It was further announced that an officer would come to select the individuals to be actually deported.

(b) The Departure

"They took," writes one witness, "men and women, young men and girls, in all parts of the city. Young girls were carried off from sixteen years of age upwards; men and women up to the age of fifty-five years." "The officer passed along," writes another witness, "pointing out those whom he selected, and leaving them from ten minutes to an hour to get ready for their departure. Antoine D——, and his

sister, 22 years old, were picked out. The officer showed some hesitation about leaving their little sister, not yet fourteen; soon after their aged grandmother became so weak from terror and grief that the last rites of the church were administered to her. The Germans finally decided not to take the little girl; but in one case an old man, in another two invalids, were deprived of the young women who were their only caretakers. The Germans meanwhile made merry over the whole affair, adding petty annoyances to their cruelty. For example, at the house of a doctor, B's uncle, the lady of the house was told she might choose which of her two servant girls she would rather keep. She gave the preference to the older one. 'Very well,' said the German, 'that's the one we will take.' The poor victims were first assembled in some building—a church or a schoolhouse—and then, herded together pell-mell, all classes and all sorts, innocent young girls side by side with women of the town—were conducted by soldiers, with a band at their head, to the railroad station. Here they were kept until the evening, when they left, knowing nothing of where they were going or the kind of labor that was to be imposed upon them."

(From "Les Déportations du Nord de la France," 1917, by Jules Basdevant, Professor of International Law in the University of Grenoble, France; translation for this pamphlet.)

(c) The Medical Inspection

"While we were waiting (in the town to which we were sent)," writes one young woman deported from Lille, "a rumor spread among us. Alongside the head of the column was a house; one girl after another went into it. I asked what it meant and was told that it was a medical inspection. Little by little the details came back to us. We were to pass, we were told, one by one, completely disrobed, before the major. I appealed to the [French] Mayor of the town: 'Monsieur, I beg of you, is there no way of escaping this?' He made a gesture of helplessness. 'The Germans are mas-

ters here, madame,' he said; 'whatever be their will, we must submit to it.'"

(From the diary of one of the deported women, printed in the *Revue des deux Mondes*, June 15, 1917, p. 861; translated for this pamphlet. Other witnesses testify to the same feature of the deportations.)

(d) Food and Housing

"The captives who were lodged in private houses did not suffer greatly from hunger; the people of the country were full of kindness and did their best to furnish them with food. But the unfortunates who were housed in factories were much more to be pitied. They were given just enough to keep body and soul together; they slept on straw; and they suffered much from the association with some of their companions. During all the months of their captivity some of them did not venture once to undress. Frequently, also, with the unmistakable design of depraving their morals, one or two women were assigned by the Germans to private houses occupied by a number of men. What can be said, finally, of their compelling young girls, in many cases, to take into the houses in which they were lodging soldiers of the regiments returning from Verdun?"

(From the *Revue des deux Mondes*, June 15, 1917, p. 880; translation for this pamphlet.)

(e) Conditions of Labor for Women and Children

A German Proclamation

HOLNON, July 20, 1915.

All laborers, adults* and children of 15 years and upward, are required to work in the fields every day, Sunday included, from 4 in the morning until 8 in the evening (French time). Rest periods allowed: half an hour in the morning, an hour at noon, half an hour in the afternoon.

Violations of this rule will be punished as follows:

1. [Relates to men.]

2. Lazy women will be sent back to Holnon to work, and after the harvest will be imprisoned for six months.

3. Lazy children will be punished by thrashing (à coups de bâton).

In addition to this, the Commandant has authority to punish lazy workers with twenty lashes every day.

Signed, Gloss, Colonel.

*The proclamation, which is written in very bad French, here reads literally "men"; but the context makes it evident that the regulations announced were applicable to persons of both sexes (above the age of fourteen).

(This proclamation was found in the French village of Holnon after its evacuation by the German troops; it is reproduced in an article by M. Gaston Deschamps, Professor in the Collège de France; *Revue des deux Mondes*, July 15, 1917, p. 411. Translation for this pamphlet.)

WOULD YOU LIKE THESE THINGS TO HAPPEN TO THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN OF MARYLAND? DO YOU THINK THEY OUGHT TO HAPPEN TO WOMEN OR CHILDREN ANYWHERE?

ENSLAVEMENT OF BELGIAN CIVILIANS

The Belgian Government on September 6, 1917, gave the following official statement to a representative of *The New York Times:*

The press-gang system begun Oct. 6 of last year has continued without intermission. Men from 17 to 45 are seized haphazard, irrespective of their state of health or social position, but younger men are preferred. They are employed on military work immediately behind the front, constructing railroads, building defenses of wood, and the like. They are treated most brutally, beaten without rhyme or reason, and their complaints of illness or exhaustion are unheeded. They are not even permitted to receive packages of food scraped together by their families from their own meagre allowance. Their rations justify only too well the name of 'hungerland' by which the scene of their miseries is now generally known. The following figures demonstrate the horror of their condition:

From the town of Harlebeke 600 men were taken. On July 1 this year 22 were reported dead by the German authorities and 108 incapable of working. This is no isolated case; things are the same or worse throughout Flanders.

The last levy at Harlebeke occurred at the end of May. The Germans placarded a call for 150 workmen for a munition depot near the station. The inhabitants refused to reply, whereupon the Germans impressed that number and immediately set them to work in gangs, with pioneer (engineer) soldiers as taskmasters. The same procedure was followed at Deerlyck and Vichte. On June 15, at Courtrai, 1,200 men of all classes were impressed and set forthwith to work near Menin. The departure of Americans from Belgium seems to have removed the last scruples of the invaders.

LATEST GERMAN METHODS OF MURDER AT SEA

Firing on Sailors Escaping in Life Boats from Torpedoed Vessels

The International Conference of Merchant Seamen, at a meeting held in London in August, 1917, has drawn up a list of twelve known cases in which, during recent months, German or Austrian submarines have fired on seamen and others seeking to escape in ships' boats, after the torpedoing of their vessels. In four of these cases, the ships were of neutral nationality. Typical examples are the following:

Eavestone, British S. S., February 3, 1917. Submarine fired on boats as crew was leaving sinking ship; 5 killed, 1 wounded.

Addah, British S. S., sunk by submarine June 15, 1917. Submarine opened fire on master's boat, killing eight men; after boat had been sunk and men were swimming in water, submarine shelled them with shrapnel.

Baltic, Swedish S. S., June 27, 1917. Boats fired on for about an hour after crew abandoned ship.

Hestia, Dutch S. S., sunk by submarine March 30, 1917. One boat fired on by submarine and sunk. Six Dutchmen and seven Chinamen killed.

More recent cases of the same form of atrocity are reported in press dispatches; for example, in the following of September 13:

A submarine sank the schooner Jane Williams of Arklow off the coast of Cornwall, Monday, by shell fire. The gun was then turned on a boat containing the crew of six, of whom three were killed and the remainder badly wounded.

On the following day the schooner William of Dublin was sunk by a submarine. The open boat in which the crew left the vessel was shelled with shrapnel, but only one man was wounded.

Thrown into the Sea to Drown

A different method was employed in the case of the steamship Belgian Prince. The following details are taken from the affidavit of Thomas A. Bowman, chief engineer, one of the three survivors of the crew of 41. After the boats had got clear of the ship, Mr. Bowman states:

> The submarine came up to where the boats were and ordered the boats to come alongside. The commander ordered the master to step on the submarine, after which he took him down in the submarine. Then all the crew and officers were ordered aboard, searched, and the lifebelts taken off the most of the crew and thrown overboard. I may add during this time the Germans were very abusive towards the crew. After which the German sailors got into two lifeboats, threw the oars, bailers and gratings overboard, took out the provisions and compasses and then damaged the lifeboats with an axe. The small boat was left intact and five German sailors got into her and went towards the ship. When they boarded her they signalled to the submarine with a flash lamp, and then the submarine cast the damaged lifeboats adrift and steamed away from the ship for about two miles, after which he stopped. About 9 p. m. the submarine dived and threw everybody in the water without the means of saving themselves, as the majority of them had had their lifebelts taken off them. After this I was swimming about all night until daylight, when I saw that the ship was still afloat. So I was swimming towards her with the intention of boarding her, when suddenly I saw her explode aft and sink stern first, which was about 5:30 a. m. After swimming about for some time after this I saw smoke on the horizon, so I swam towards it. It proved to be an English patrol boat, which picked me up at about 6:30 a. m. Wednesday morning.
>
> (Affidavits of all three survivors are printed in the New York *Tribune*, September 15, 1917.)

These Acts Parts of a System

Several of the above cases, especially that of the Belgian Prince, are evidently attempts to apply the method of "sinking without leaving any traces" (*spurlos versenken*) referred to by the German diplomatic representative in Argentina, Count Luxburg, in his dispatches that were intercepted by our Department of State. The sailors whom he suggested that it might be advisable to murder in this manner were citizens of a country with which Germany professed to be at peace, and of which the author of this proposal of secret assassination was the guest. In how many instances the Germans **succeeded,** by similar methods, in sinking neutral and other ships "without leaving any traces" we do not know. The cases recorded are those in which a few survivors were accidentally left.

LOOTING

(a) The Law, and the German Promise

"The honor and the rights of the family, the life and property of individuals, religious convictions and the exercise of public worship, shall be respected [by armed forces occupying enemy territory]. Looting is specifically forbidden."

(Articles 46 and 47 of the Laws of War, adopted by the Hague Conference of 1907, which Germany in 1908 promised to observe.)

(b) The German Practice

Paris, August 20, 1917. The Germans, according to French statements, not only deliberately caused the fires that have partially ruined the beautiful and famous Cathedral of St. Quentin, but pillaged the city before they set fire to a part of it.

The vandalism is laid to the door of officers and soldiers of the One Hundred and Sixteenth and One Hundred and Seventeenth Regiments of the Twenty-fifth German division, and more or less directly to the commanders of these units, respectively, Colonel Gjing, Colonel Klot and General von Scharfenstein, who are charged with having ordered a systematic pillage of St. Quentin as soon as they entered the city.

Officers, with soldiers to do the heavy work, went about the city, it is claimed, and carried off furniture, silverware, pianos and valuable pictures and shipped them to Germany. They even took safes filled with valuables and did it openly, piling their loot onto vans in midday. One officer and a number of soldiers were observed, it is said, as they attempted to steal strong boxes from a bank. The pillaging troops worked under orders to establish a depot for loot on the route to Cambrai, where "finds" from various towns were concentrated. The soldiers received instructions to take anything they pleased or that looked valuable, and in consequence have "cleared out" the city of St. Quentin as well as countless smaller places. Numberless men on furlough are said to have gone back to their homes laden with loot. Nor has money been overlooked in the vandal hunt. One soldier of the One Hundred and Sixteenth Regiment is supposed to have uncovered 30,000 francs and then have appropriated it, while smaller sums are missing from a number of homes.

Today there remains in St. Quentin homes only old, broken and worthless furniture. Everything of value has been carried away.

(*Associated Press correspondence.*)

WAR AS A LEGITIMATE COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISE

Friedrich Naumann is an important political leader in Germany, and one of the most celebrated and influential of

German writers on public questions. He expresses in the following terms the cynical doctrine that it is natural and legitimate for a country to make war for the sole purpose of increasing its wealth:

> On the whole, modern war may be regarded as a profit-seeking business enterprise. This is a point of view which ought not to be disguised, but, on the contrary, fully and frankly upheld, if we are to find economic justification for war and armaments. . . . War is waged in the interests of the economic development of the State. It is waged with the object of intervening in the general economic conflict. . . . We must judge wars not by the speeches with which they are opened, but by the paragraphs with which they are closed.
>
> ("Das blaue Buch von Vaterland und Freiheit", 1913, pp. 263-4; cited in Dampierre, "German Imperialism and International Law," 1917.)

This form of "business enterprise" Germany has been carrying on for more than three years. Can the civilized world permit it to be rewarded with success?

STRIPPING BELGIUM OF MACHINERY TO CUT OFF THE NATION'S RESOURCES

Havre, September 4. Information which has reached the Belgian Government from beyond the lines shows that what is left of Belgian manufacturing machinery is being systematically taken out of the country or destroyed when not removed.

The machines have been taken from all the factories in La Providence and other nearby places within the last fortnight.

These advices say that when the manager of the Providence mills protested to the German officer in command against the proceeding he was told that the orders from Berlin were to empty Belgium of its manufacturing resources, so that nothing could be produced there.

(Press dispatch.)

SINKING SHIPS AS A BUSINESS PROPOSITION

That one of the objects of the German submarine campaign is to promote Germany's business interests after the war, by destroying the future competition of enemy countries in the carrying-trade, is plainly disclosed by the following passage from an editorial in the principal official organ of the Prussian Government, *The North German Gazette*:

> Over against the immense values which the Entente Powers are losing daily in ships and cargoes, foremost of which are those of England, not to mention the costs of meeting the submarine war, our losses are almost infinitesimal. They consist only in lost U-boats and munitions.
>
> This wholly unequal proportion becomes more pronounced as the submarine campaign goes on. The more capital our enemies invest in shipbuilding the greater will be the ratio of values wiped out, and to this increased extent we are permitted to consider the success of our U-boat campaign as an economic gain of immediate importance.
>
> (Transmitted in Associated Press correspondence, June 15, 1917.)

It cannot be doubted that the same business calculation has been made by the German authorities in ordering the sinking of the ships, and the killing of the sailors, of countries with which Germany has pretended to be at peace.

WHAT GERMANY UNDERSTANDS BY BEING AT PEACE WITH A COUNTRY

The Case of Norway

In 1914 Norway was Germany's principal competitor on the continent of Europe in the ocean carrying-trade. The tonnage of Norwegian merchant ships (nearly 2,500,000 tons) was almost half as great as the German (5,000,000 tons). It would clearly be an excellent thing for Germany's shipping business after the war if, in the course of the war, a great many Norwegian ships could be sunk.

But Germany and Norway have continued to be "at peace." Germany has merely done the following things to her helpless neighbor since 1914:

1. She has maintained a small army of spies in all the ports of Norway, to report to German submarine commanders the movements of Norwegian and other merchant ships, so that the submarines might the more easily destroy them.

2. She has had manufactured, in German government-controlled factories, skillfully disguised bombs, having the appearance of lumps of coal, boxes of chewing tobacco, etc.

3. She has sent such bombs into Norway by the official couriers of the German Embassy, whose baggage is, by the usual courtesies of diplomatic intercourse, not subject to examination.

4. She has had these bombs placed by her secret agents in the holds and coal-bunkers of Norwegian vessels, the bombs being timed to explode after the ships were at sea.

5. By means of bombs, submarines and mines, she has destroyed more than 400 Norwegian vessels, representing nearly 1,000,000 tons.

6. She has—especially of late—caused her submarines in many cases to fire upon Norwegian crews escaping in life boats from their sinking ships.

7. By such means she has killed more than 500 Norwegian sailors. Most of these victims have suffered cruel and horrible deaths. Many have been shot to pieces while swimming to catch a piece of wreckage; many have starved to death drifting in small boats on the open sea; others have been set adrift in Arctic waters to freeze to death.

8. According to the general belief in Norway, German spies were responsible for the unquestionably incendiary fire which in July, 1917, broke out at three places simultaneously in Trondhjem, the principal commercial centre of Northern Norway, and destroyed most of the warehouse and shipping district of the city.

9. Germany is still pursuing these methods, and is doing her best to destroy Norway's entire merchant shipping, or drive it from the seas.

(See article by N. A. Grevstad, in *New York Tribune*, September 16, and interview with Dr. Fridtjof Nansen, September 17, 1917.)

This is what it means to be "at peace" with Germany. Is it not better for a self-respecting people to be openly at war with her? Norway is too little, too weak, and her women and children are too exposed to the horrors of a German invasion, to dare to resist these treacherous acts of war. The United States has the good fortune to be neither little nor weak; and it does not mean to have this kind of "peace" with any country. But it was only this kind of "peace" which the United States could have maintained with Germany, even at the cost of abject surrender of American rights and disloyalty to national duty. These same acts of war Germany was constantly committing against us—sinking our ships, killing our sailors and travelers, placing spies in our offices of government, burning factories, attempting by intrigue and corruption to influence our legislative bodies and to stir up sedition among our citizens. In determining to put an end to all this, we are defending at one and the same time our own rights, the rights of weaker nations, and the principles of law and order and humanity upon which all permanent peace and security among mankind must depend.

WHY THE WAR MUST BE FOUGHT TO A DECISION

By President A. Lawrence Lowell of Harvard University.

This war cannot leave the world as it was before. The result must either be a better world or a worse one. If Germany should win, the principles of her government must triumph: the ruthless rule of force, exploiting the earth for the benefit of the strong, oppressing other peoples, and beating down small, weak, or peaceful nations.

If the result should be a drawn battle, a stalemate, with Germany in her present state of mind, the whole world will probably become a series of armed camps, preparing for another fray and compelled by the very conditions by which they are faced to adopt the methods of warfare Germany has introduced—that is, the nation in arms, using every resource at its command and striving to destroy by every means the resources of the people to which it is opposed. Can anyone contemplate without horror a planet whose inhabitants devote their efforts to devising scientific processes to make it unfit for human habitation? Yet such is the result that we must at least contemplate if the present war should decide nothing, leaving the belligerents with their former ambitions and principles, with fiercer hatreds, and a better knowledge of what the next war will signify.

If, on the other hand, the side on which we are fighting wins, it may mean a better world, reorganized on a basis of justice and peace; and a large part of the result may depend on us, both in the field and at the council table.

Let us be perfectly clear in our own minds. We proclaim that we are fighting for democracy, but President Wilson has put it more accurately when he said that we were at war to make the world safe for democracy. We are not fighting to impose any form of government upon an unwilling people. That would be contrary to the principles of political liberty.

If any people prefer to be ruled by a monarch, it is their affair, provided they mind their own business and live peaceably with their neighbors; a military autocracy that goes forth conquering and to conquer, the world must subdue or it will have no peace; moreover, the oppression of one race by another must, so far as possible, be removed. For that reason we cannot consider the return to Germany of her former colonies, that their people may be exploited as they have been in the past.

We are at war to prevent any nation from imposing an autocratic military system on the world or any people; and when the Allies have succeeded in so doing, they, and any other peoples that sincerely desire a better and more peaceful world, must solemnly resolve that no such catastrophe shall occur again.

(Address before the National Safety Council, New York City, September 12, 1917.)

WHAT WE ARE CONTENDING FOR

By President Woodrow Wilson.

In any event our duty is clear. No nation, no group of nations, has the right while war is in progress to alter or disregard the principles which all nations have agreed upon in mitigation of the horrors and sufferings of war; and if the clear right of American citizens should ever unhappily be abridged or denied by any such action we should, it seems to me, have in honor no choice as to what our own course should be.

For my own part, I cannot consent to any abridgment of the rights of American citizens in any respect. The honor and self-respect of the nation are involved. We covet peace, and shall preserve it at any cost but the loss of honor. To forbid our people to exercise their rights for fear we might be called upon to vindicate them would be a deep humilia-

nion indeed. It would be an implicit, all but an explicit, acquiescence in the violation of the rights of mankind everywhere, and of whatever nation or allegiance. It would be a deliberate abdication of our hitherto proud position as spokesmen, even amidst the turmoil of war, for the law and the right. It would make everything this Government has attempted, and everything that it has achieved during this terrible struggle of nations, meaningless and futile.

It is important to reflect that if in this instance we allow expediency to take the place of principle, the door would inevitably be opened to still further concessions. Once accept a single abatement of right, and many other humiliations would certainly follow, and the whole fine fabric of international law might crumble under our hands piece by piece. What we are contending for in this matter is of the very essence of the things that have made America a sovereign nation. She cannot yield them without conceding her own impotency as a nation, and making virtual surrender of her independent position among the nations of the world.

(Letter to Senator William J. Stone, February 24, 1916.)

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THE MEANING OF AMERICA'S WAR

By President Woodrow Wilson.

The wrongs against which we now array ourselves are no common wrongs; they cut to the very roots of human life

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We are at the beginning of an age in which it will be insisted that the same standards of conduct and of responsibility for wrong done shall be observed among nations and their governments that are observed among the individual citizens of civilized States. . . . . .

We are accepting this challenge of hostile purpose because we know that in such a government, following such methods, we can never have a friend; and that in the presence of its organized power, always lying in wait to accomplish we know not what purpose, can be no assured security for the democratic governments of the world. We are now about to accept the gauge of battle with this natural foe to liberty and shall, if necessary, spend the whole force of the nation to check and nullify its pretensions and its power. We are glad, now that we see the facts with no veil of false pretense about them, to fight thus for the ultimate peace of the world and for the liberation of its peoples, the German peoples included; for the rights of nations, great and small, and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their way of life and of obedience.

The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. We shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can make them.

(Address to Congress, April 2, 1917.)

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